

The attached Appendix includes marked-up copies of each rewritten claim (37 C.F.R. §1.121(c)(1)(ii)).

The Office Action rejects claims 1-3, 9-11, 13 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,764,315 to Yokota et al. This rejection is moot with respect to the cancelled claims 1 and 3, and is respectfully traversed with respect to the remaining claims.

The Office Action asserts that Yokota discloses all elements recited in claim 2. However, Applicant respectfully submits that Yokota does not disclose a plurality of straight groove portions formed directly on a surface of said transparent substrate...so as to reflect light toward said liquid crystal panel, as recited in claim 2.

Yokota discloses a light adjusting sheet for a planar lighting device in which light distribution can be concentrated in the forward direction. See col. 4, lines 25-29. Light from the light source 33 is reflected by the reflector plate 34, and the reflected light travels in the upward direction to pass through the light adjusting sheet 50. See Fig. 12, col. 9, lines 9-23. Applicant respectfully submits that the reflected light is already traveling in the upward direction before passing through the light adjusting sheet 50, and the light adjusting sheet 50 merely allows the light to pass through and to continue traveling in the upward direction. Thus, Yokota does not disclose the plurality of straight groove portions formed directly on the surface of said transparent substrate...so as to reflect light towards said liquid crystal panel, as recited in claim 2.

Yokota discloses a light adjusting sheet 50 that is separate from the light guiding plate 32. See Fig. 12. Thus, the convex and concave ridges formed on the light adjusting sheet 50 are not directly formed on the light guiding plate 32. Yokota discloses stacking two sheets so that the ridge peak lines of one sheet cross over the ridge peak lines of the other sheet. See Fig. 14 and col. 10, lines 1-16. Because this crossing of the peak lines is formed between two separate sheets, Yokota does not disclose forming the crossing of the peak lines directly on

any one sheet. Therefore, Yokota does not disclose a plurality of straight groove portions formed directly on the surface of said transparent substrate...so as to reflect light toward said liquid crystal panel, as recited in claim 2.

For at least the above reasons, Yokota does not disclose each and every element recited in claim 2. Thus, Yokota does not disclose the subject matter recited in claim 2, and claims 9-11, 13 and 14 depending there from.

Furthermore, Applicants respectfully submits that the rejection of claims 10 and 11 is improper. The Office Action asserts, without citing any specific portions of Yokota, that Yokota discloses an interval between the groove portion that is increased as the distance from the bar-like light source is increased, and that a depth of the groove portions is increased as the distance from the bar-like light source is increased. Applicant respectfully submits that this Office Action assertion is not supported in Yokota. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner identify the specific portions in support to this Office Action assertion. The Examiner is required to identify specifically where teachings are found to establish *prima facie* case of anticipation, so that applicants can recognize and seek to counter the grounds for rejection. See Chester v. Bailer, 15 USPQ2d 1333, 1337 (Fed. Cir. 1990). Absent identified support to this Office Action assertion, the rejection of claims 10 and 11 is improper.

In view of the above, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-3, 9-11, 13 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claim 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Yokota. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Office Action admits that Yokota does not disclose or suggest the bar-like light source that is in the range of 10 to 45 degrees. However, the Office Action asserts that such a range is obvious. Applicant respectfully submits that claim 12 is patentable in view of the patentability of claim 2 from which it depends, as well as for the additional features it recites.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claim 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

Claim 15 is believed to be patentable.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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JAO:GXL/hs

Attachment:
Appendix

Date: April 29, 2003

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<p>DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE AUTHORIZATION Please grant any extension necessary for entry; Charge any fee due to our Deposit Account No. 15-0461</p>

APPENDIX

Changes to Claims:

Claims 1 and 3 are canceled.

Claim 15 is added.

The following is a marked-up version of the amended claims:

2. (Amended) A spread illuminating apparatus in which a square transparent substrate is provided close to ~~the~~a surface of a liquid crystal panel and said liquid crystal panel is illuminated through said transparent substrate by a bar-like light source which is provided parallel with ~~the~~a side surface of said transparent substrate, wherein a plurality of straight groove portions are formed directly on the~~a~~ surface of said transparent substrate intersecting one another obliquely with respect to ~~the~~ four sides of said transparent substrate so as to reflect light toward said liquid crystal panel.
10. (Amended) A spread illuminating apparatus according to claim 2, wherein ~~the~~ an interval between said groove portions is decreased as ~~the~~a distance from said bar-like light source increases.
11. (Amended) A spread illuminating apparatus according to claim 2, wherein ~~the~~ a depth of said groove portions is increased as ~~the~~a distance from said bar-like source increases.
12. (Amended) A spread illuminating apparatus according to claim 2, wherein an angle defined between each of said groove portions and ~~the~~a side of said transparent substrate opposing said bar-like light source is in ~~the~~a range of 10-45 degrees.
14. (Amended) A spread illuminating apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said bar-like light source includes a bar-like transparent light conductive member and a light emitting diode which is provided at ~~the~~an end portion of said bar-like transparent light conductive member.